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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence

28 April 1975

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam
(As of 1600 EDST)
No. 28

Communists Reject Ceasefire

1. The quick rejection of "Big" Minh's call for a ceasefire suggests that the Communists will accept nothing less than a prompt declaration of surrender from the South Vietnamese. Viet Cong spokesman in Paris and Saigon within minutes after Minh completed his inaugural speech containing the request categorically rejected it and reiterated a series of demands which have gotten tougher during the past few days. With North Vietnamese forces on Saigon's outskirts and Viet Cong sappers inside the city, the Communists appear ready to put direct military pressure on the capital to back up their demands for surrender.

2. It thus is doubtful that Minh will have the time to complete his government of national reconciliation. During his inaugural speech, he announced that Catholic leader Nguyen Van Huyen would be the new vice president and Buddhist senator Vu Van Mau would be his new prime minister. Other members of the government, he said, would be announced during the next few days.

NSA review(s)
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Military Developments

3. The Tan Son Nhut airport has been temporarily reopened and US C-130 aircraft have resumed evacuation flights. Communist units have been driven from several bridges on the eastern outskirts of the city, and traffic is again flowing from Bien Hoa. Saigon's 24-hour curfew has been lifted.

4. General Toan reportedly has ordered Military Region 3 Headquarters moved from Bien Hoa to Saigon. There has also been a report that several senior officers of the Joint General Staff, including the chairman, General Cao Van Vien, have resigned and have fled the country.

5. Saigon is now directly threatened by Communist forces. Sapper attacks began on the edges of the capital on April 28. The Communists are placing artillery on all sides of the city and will be able to shell specific targets with great accuracy and effectiveness.

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The Eastern Front

6. Communist forces are closing in on the few remaining government holdings east of Saigon. The South Vietnamese 18th Division defending Bien Hoa on the east is now in complete disarray and the North Vietnamese have almost a clear shot at the city. North Vietnamese units have been ordered to strike quickly and strongly in this area.

7. The South Vietnamese Air Force has been ordered to move everything it can to Tan Son Nhut and to destroy all facilities including bombs at the Bien Hoa airbase. The airbase and nearby Bien Hoa city have been hit by heavy artillery

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and rocket fire and refugees have been flooding the main roads to Saigon.

8. To the southeast, elements of the 1st Airborne Brigade and the South Vietnamese 3rd Division have been forced back down the narrow peninsula toward Vung Tau. They have destroyed a bridge on the only access road, slowing direct Communist armor movements, but the city has now been targeted by Communist artillery from nearby positions and heavy shellings of the city and of the ships in the harbor will probably soon force the city's capitulation.

9. There are still several other pockets of government resistance east of Saigon, but many of these are becoming further isolated and will soon fall. Some Marines are still reported holding on at the Long Binh logistics complex, but they are surrounded and do not stand much of a chance to hold out for long.

The Western Front

10. The Communists have also stepped up the pressure north and west of Saigon. North Vietnamese forces have launched strong attacks against Tay Ninh City and the South Vietnamese 25th Division at Cu Chi. Attacks are also underway all around Tan An and this provincial capital will probably fall soon, clearing the Route 4 approach to Saigon, enabling more Communist units to move up from the southwest.

Bombing of Saigon

11. There has been no positive identification of the base of origin of the six A-37 aircraft that participated in today's bombing of Tan Son Nhut airbase or of the pilots who flew them. Most of the available evidence suggests that the aircraft came from Phan Rang and were piloted by turn-coat South Vietnamese pilots.

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- The fuel tank configuration of the aircraft was of the type flown north of the Saigon area.
- South Vietnamese F-5 pilots chasing the attacking aircraft reported they landed at Phan Rang.
- There have been no reports of A-37 aircraft missing from the Tan Son Nhut inventory.
- The precision of the execution of attack suggests the pilots were very familiar with the aircraft and its operation.
- The knowledge of the target area further tends to rule out North Vietnamese pilots.
- General Song, the former commander of the South Vietnamese 6th Air Division who was captured at Phan Rang has since exhorted his former colleagues and subordinates to come over to the Communist side.

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Additional such airraids can be expected as ex-South Vietnamese are challenged to prove their loyalty to the Communists. There are enough munitions and fuel available to the Communists to arm captured aircraft to stage many more similar bombings.

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